

 St Albans City & District Council	Job Outline Customer, Business and Corporate Support
Job Title:	Head of Shared Legal Services for SADC and Watford Borough Council
Post Number	P2050
Grade:	PO6
Salary:	£89,000 inclusive of allowance
Directorate:	Customer, Business and Corporate Support
Accountable to:	Strategic Director Customer, Business and Corporate Support and Shared Services Partnership Board
Line Management	5 direct reports
Date created/ reviewed:	June 2025

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR HEAD OF LEGAL SHARED SERVICES

Job Purpose

The Head of Legal Shared Services will be responsible for the overall management of the shared service, ensuring that the desired benefits are achieved. This will entail developing, leading and managing a responsive, cost effective and professional Legal Service providing quality legal services to St Albans District Council and Watford Borough Council.

This role will be accountable to both authorities including relevant Elected Councillors, to ensure that the shared service develops as required, monitoring and reporting on performance regularly. To lead the Legal Services Management Team and service and be responsible for the provision of high quality, solution focused legal services to clients.

Note: *This role will not be the Monitoring Officer for either authority*

Where requested by the shared services partners:

- Responsible for safeguarding the interests of partners by providing strategic legal advice and support to all authorities, the senior leadership teams and councillors on sensitive and highly complex legal matters.
- Supporting the Strategic Leadership teams in implementing the vision and core values of each council and providing a clear sense of leadership direction and purpose across Shared Legal Services and ensuring the effective delivery of the shared services business plan, assisting the Strategic Leadership teams in meeting their corporate priorities and objectives and attending such meetings as required.

Accountabilities

1. Provide business focused and strategic leadership to the councils' Legal Services and lead in the development of a marketable shared Legal Service Model which can be offered to other Public and Private Sector organisations. Contribute to the achievement of both council's corporate objectives and secure continuous improvement in the delivery of Shared Legal Services. Regularly liaise with the key relationship managers from both Councils to discuss issues and workload.
2. Undertake the efficient and effective management and procurement of external legal services by partner councils. You will also lead on business planning, budget management, performance and risk management of the service. Developing the culture, values and behaviours required by both Councils to deliver a comprehensive and effective, value for money in house legal service.
3. Work with clients from both Councils to negotiate, establish and review Service Level Agreements and local performance indicators. Actively participate in the Legal Services Partnership Board to ensure robust oversight of the service and ensure these are delivered in a consistent, robust and fair manner. Acting as the primary contact for external partners, promoting and developing the service and its network in the public, private and legal sectors.
4. Ensure the provision of a high-quality legal advice to all partners, Senior Leadership teams and elected councillors to underpin effective decision making, meet statutory requirements and ensure good general practice. This involves interpretation of the law and overseeing highly complex and high-profile cases.
5. To be a full participating member of the Customer, Business and Corporate Support Management Team driving strategy and performance and identifying and championing the delivery of the directorate's vision and strategy whilst respecting the need to support other partners equally.
6. To establish and be accountable for the legal and governance frameworks and ensure that the Council adhere to the relevant statutory duties and legislative obligations. Provide advice on the legal framework within which the Councils operate ensuring that all member and officer decision making is within the Council's legal powers.
7. To advise the Councils on new legislative requirements and implement changes where required. To lead, develop and improve the delivery of legal services for Legal Shared Services.
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9. As required by the senior officers at the partner councils, contribute to the management of at a senior level and actively participate in departmental management teams and other corporate groups by contributing to the achievement of the Authority's strategic aims and continuously improving its performance, understanding the council's priorities and ambitions and driving continual improvements within the service.
10. To participate or lead on corporate projects and contribute to the development of

corporate policies and strategic decision making as required.

Demands

Mental Demands

- Able to manage high profile and complex cases and multiple deadlines at the same time; Able to develop new ideas and solutions to transform the service and gain commitment from staff, partners and Councillors to changes;
- Strategic thinking, problem solving with the ability to make quick and accurate judgements and decisions in high risk and unpredictable situations;
- High degree of political management skills, able to influence and work effectively with politicians and senior stakeholders;
- High quality leadership and people management skills;
- Able to manage and prioritise requests from the Councillors, Senior Leadership Teams and key stakeholders across both councils, and respond appropriately;
- Able to deal with difficult stakeholders across both Councils, demands and difficult situations involving senior politicians.

Other Employment Requirements

- This post is politically restricted under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- This job is suitable for hybrid working
- The job holder will be required to attend meetings held at the Council Offices or other locations outside normal office hours.
- The post holder will need to be able to attend conferences and off-site meetings as required.
- The post holder will be expected to carry out relevant continuing professional development

ROLE SPECIFIC PERSON SPECIFICATION – HEAD OF LEGAL SHARED SERVICES				
Criteria		Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Values and Behaviours				
	We are Customer Driven	X		I, T
	We Care	X		I, T
	We are Confident	X		I, T
	We Work Together	X		I, T
	We are Trusted	X		I, T
Qualifications				
Q1	Degree or other equivalent level qualification in a relevant work area or with significant practical professional experience in law.	X		D
Q2	Qualification as a Solicitor/Barrister	X		D
Q3	Possession of or entitlement to relevant practising certificate.	X		D
Q4	Full Membership of the Law Society e.g. Fellow	X		D
Q5	Management qualification or completion of a recognised management development/leadership programme		X	A,D,I
Knowledge				
K1	Understanding of all aspects of local government law: in particular the structural frameworks of local authorities, the limitations of powers, understanding the scope of judicial review and general compliance powers and the corporate governance frameworks which underpins all decision making across the Council	X		A,I
K2	Substantial practical and procedural knowledge of public sector practice, the political environment and statutory obligations across the organisation as a whole	X		A,I
K3	Knowledge and understanding of: - shared service and partnership landscape and stakeholder engagement with an awareness of the complex governance arrangements that typically feature in multi-agency partnerships. - best practice in service delivery and continuous improvement - performance management and target setting - procurement and contract management - corporate and business planning and budget management	X		A,I

K4	To demonstrate an understanding of corporate equalities standards and diversity issues and how they affect the workplace and individual behaviours and immediate work and service area.	X		A,I
K5	To have excellent level of IT literacy to be able to use MS Office, Nuance Advanced, Excel, Outlook etc, Westlaw, Practical Law and specialist legal case management software such as IKEN.	X		A,I
K6	Advanced knowledge of information governance including protection of data, sensitive and confidential information, and access to records with the ability to apply public interest arguments to the use of sensitive information.		X	A,I
Experience				
E1	Extensive experience of operating as a senior manager in a complex legal service environment which incorporates decision making, strategic and business planning	X		A,I
E2	Proven track record of leading strategic policy formulation, decision making and resources allocation and of problem solving and meeting objectives at a senior level. A demonstrated ability to advise members of policy options, determine priorities and to communicate a clearly recommended way forward	X		A,I
E3	Experience of working effectively in a political environment, demonstrating high levels of political awareness, sensitivity, confidentiality and understanding with the ability to translate that into delivering the agendas of the administration and winning the confidence of elected members	X		A,I
E4	Demonstrated evidence of significant service improvement through managing change including staff engagement, capacity building, workforce modernisation and organisational reform. Evidence of developing and encouraging innovative ideas to drive improvement in the delivery of services.	X		A,I
E5	Significant experience of the preparation, management and control and targeting of budgets, ensuring priorities and targeting of resources to achieve maximum value for money and income generation	X		A,I
E6	Experience of negotiating complex matters of high value, translating those matters into action that best represents and protects the interests of the Council	X		A,I
E7	Providing advice on high profile matters and able to influence and persuade others to change their course of action or thinking	X		A,I
E8	Using written and oral communication skills to provide clear and accessible reports and presentations to customers, colleagues, partners and	X		A,I

	politicians			
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Method of Assessment Codes

A	Application Form	T	Tests (online / at interview)	R	Reference	D	Documentary Evidence	I	Interview	O	Other
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For further information on the scope of accountabilities when working at this level please see the generic job description/person specification on our website.